

United Engineering Company Shipyard,  
Boiler Maker's House  
(Building No. 25)  
2900 Main Street  
Alameda  
Alameda County  
California

HAER No. CA-295-O

HAER  
CAL  
1-ALAM,  
40-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
San Francisco, California

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## HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

### UNITED ENGINEERING COMPANY SHIPYARD, BOILER MAKER'S HOUSE (Building No. 25)

HAER No. CA-295-O

**Location:** 2900 Main Street  
Alameda  
Alameda County  
California

U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute Oakland West, Calif. quadrangle.  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 10.562430.41842650

**Significance:** The boiler maker's house is a contributing structure in the United Engineering Company Shipyard historic district that has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The United Engineering Company Shipyard, established in 1941 to build and repair ships for the U.S. Navy, is the last surviving of several large World War II shipyards in Alameda. United Engineering built 21 tugboats and repaired hundreds of ships during the war. The facility was one of the largest employers in Alameda and played an important economic and social role in the city. This building housed one of the basic industrial functions of the shipyard.

**Description:** The boiler maker's house is located north of the large Inspection and Repair Shops building at the base of the wharf in the Alameda Gateway complex. The boiler maker's house is a one-story rectangular-shaped building oriented east-west. It measures 33 feet 3 inches across the north and south sides and 25 feet 2 inches across the east and west ends. The structure has a total area of 825 square feet. Like many of the buildings constructed at the yards from 1941 to 1945, the boiler maker's house is utilitarian in appearance and has little ornamentation.

The boiler maker's house rests on a foundation of wood posts. The building consists of a stud frame structural system covered with board and batten wood siding on the exterior. The siding is painted gray, the trim is burgundy and the sash is white. The roof is gabled with a low pitch, and a "Bay Ship and Yacht Company" sign sits on top. Because of the roof's low pitch, its covering is not visible.

The doors and windows all appear to be original. The windows are double-hung, six-over-six, divided-light windows with wooden sashes. The opening on the south side has a half-glassed door, and the main entrance on the east end has sliding wooden doors.

The interior of the building is composed of one large room with a small bathroom in the southwest corner. The bathroom is only accessible from the exterior door on the south side. The ceiling is open leaving the wood trusses visible. The walls are covered with painted plywood, and the floor is carpeted. In the large room there are hanging fluorescent lights and a drinking fountain; they appear to be later additions. The bathroom is fully plumbed.

The building has been moved from its original location southeast of the south end of Pier 3 but otherwise appears to have been little altered and to be in good condition.

**Historical Context:**

United Engineering built the boiler maker's house during a construction campaign in the early 1940s. At that time the company quickly built numerous buildings to accommodate shipbuilding and repair necessitated by U.S. involvement in World War II.

The boiler maker's house first appeared on a site plan of the shipyard dated 22 October 1942. At that time it was located near the south end of Pier No. 3 and was identified as a boiler shed. On a June 1943 site plan, it was identified as a boiler house. On a 1951 site plan it was labeled as building no. 37. Some time after 1951, it was moved to its present location. In 2001, the building is used as a break room for the Bay Ship and Yacht Company employees.

**Sources:**

Alameda County Recorder. Exhibit B: Description of Buildings, Waterfront Improvements, Shipyard Utilities, Machinery and Equipment. 18 February 1970. RE: 2568, IM 80-82.

Alameda County Recorder. Grant Deed. Matson Navigation Company to Todd Shipyards Corporation 6 March 1959, including List of Buildings, Fixtures, and Improvements.

Kennedy, Clyde C., Engineering Office of. "Area Plan and Interceptor Profile: Improvements to Sewer System for Properties Occupied by Todd Shipyards Corp., Alameda, Calif." Prepared for Matson - United Properties, Inc. 9 August 1951.

United Engineering Company Ltd. *Alameda Shipyard, San Francisco Area*, Sketch No. 48. 10 February 1944.

United Engineering Company Ltd. *Alameda Shipyard: Map Showing Existing Facilities and Those Under Construction*. 22 October 1942.

United Engineering Company Ltd. *Map of Alameda Shipyard Showing Existing and Proposed Additional Facilities.* Plan no. UEC-A-1-7. 14 June 1943.

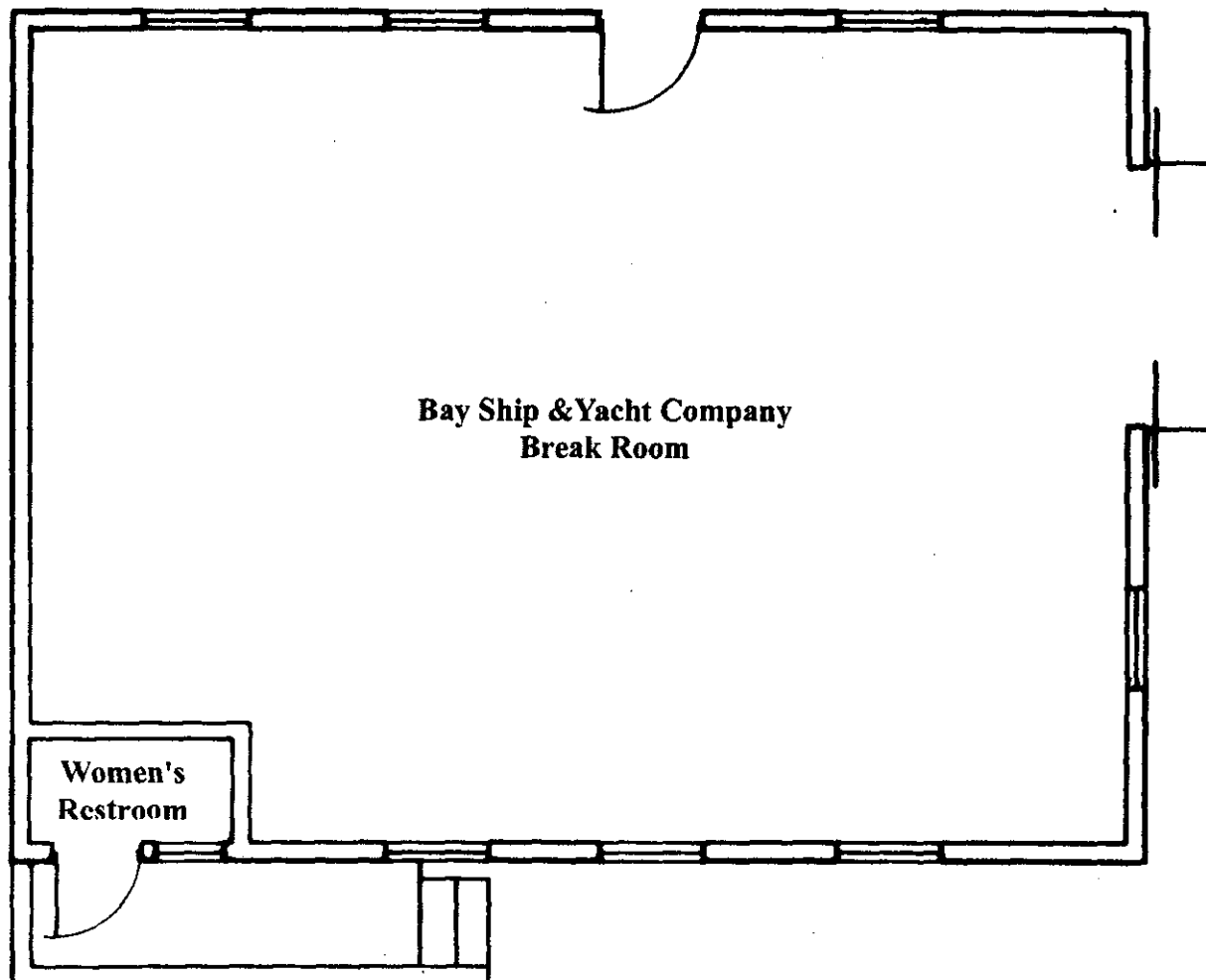
United Engineering Company Ltd. Memo to Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks. "Reproduction Costs and Market Value to Third Parties of 'Civil Works'", with Estimated Schedule of "Civil Works" Facilities. 8 February 1946.

**Project Information:** This report was prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Port of Oakland in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco District and the California State Historic Preservation Officer concerning the former United Engineering Company shipyard. The Port of Oakland and the City of Alameda were concurring parties to the MOA. The MOA was created because of a proposal by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers in partnership with the Port of Oakland to sponsor the Oakland Harbor Navigation Improvements Project. This project "would deepen Oakland Harbor channels and berth areas from -42 feet mean lower low water (MLLW) to -50 feet MLLW, with 2 feet overdredge allowance" and widen some portions of the channels. These actions, which would constitute an Undertaking under Section 106, would result in the demolition of several buildings and structures at the former United Engineering Company Shipyard. Because the shipyard had been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the Undertaking would have an adverse effect on the property. Under the MOA, the following HAER documentation has been prepared: a written historic and descriptive report on the shipyard as a whole, seventeen separate reports on individual buildings and structures in the shipyard, including this report, and photographic documentation.

This building will not be demolished by the federal undertaking.

This report was prepared by Jody Stock, architectural designer, and Michael R. Corbett, architectural historian. Corbett was a subcontractor to Basin Research Associates of San Leandro. Basin Research was under contract to g. borchard & associates.

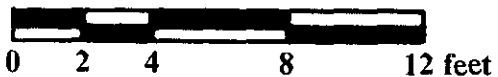
**UNITED ENGINEERING COMPANY SHIPYARD, BOILERMAKER'S HOUSE**  
(Building No. 25)  
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**BUILDING NO. 25: BOILERMAKER'S HOUSE**



**NORTH**



Measured by Stephen Hardy and Jody Stock  
1/8/01

Drawing prepared by Jody R. Stock  
2/10/01